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THE NATURE OF PEACE IN DARKNESS

BY

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Royal Cambodian Army

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE NATURE OF PEACE IN DARKNESS**

by

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## ABSTRACT

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In any peace operation, peace is not achieved by the peace-keepers alone. The willingness of all factions in a civil war to maintain a long-lasting commitment is also significant. The breakaway of any faction during peace implementation can cause the whole process to collapse.

This paper examines the dynamics and the pitfalls of a peace operation, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). It examines the background to the conflict, the process in which UNTAC was established, the operation of UNTAC in Cambodia, and the circumstance -- both within UNTAC and within Cambodia -- that affected the outcome of this operation.

While there were problems with the way UNTAC was organized and with the way in which it operated, the failure of the Cambodian factions to comply with the peace Accords greatly contributed to the collapse of the whole process.



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This paper has been developed from previous documents that I wrote during courses in the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies and the Army War College's core curriculum. Parts of this study were drawn from my experience while serving as military representative of a Cambodian faction, the Khmer People's National Liberation Armed Forces (KPNLAF), during the entire time the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was active. I was assigned as a permanent representative of the KPNLF faction to the Mixed Military Working Group (MMWG) of UNTAC's Military Component, which was a single quadripartite forum to deal with military issues during the implementation of the peace process. I also had opportunities to share views with Lieutenant General John Sanderson and other former UNTAC senior officers in the aftermath of the mission.

I would like to thank Colonel (Ret.) Donald W. Boose, my Project Advisor, for his valuable recommendations and help in structuring this paper. I am also grateful for the advice I received from my Faculty Advisor, Colonel Richard Mullery, to proceed with this particular subject. I also take this opportunity to thank Lieutenant Colonel Jim Joseph, my seminarmate, who has been helping me to develop the previous essays, especially in correctness of English writing.

Suon Samnang



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## INTRODUCTION

It seemed to be a clear indication of peace coming to Cambodia after all the warring factions agreed to sign a Peace Agreement in Paris on 23 October 1991. This remarkable event has brought hope to most of the Cambodian people who want to see the end of their suffering and, more importantly, the opportunity to determine their country's future through a democratic election. However, after ten years of effort and nearly a two billion dollar investment, peace and harmony for the Cambodian people remains in the dark as they have been unable to achieve this goal.

After the election in May 1993, Cambodia enjoyed its legitimacy under an unstable Coalition Government for just a short period of time. Peace and security have not dominated in some areas of the country due to the Khmer Rouge insurgency. The reconciliation within a two prime minister-type of government was seen as going well for the first two years.<sup>1</sup> But it has subsequently been plagued by political differences, force confrontation, and, eventually, open conflict. The former socialist party, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), whose authoritarian style of government ruled Cambodia for the last fourteen years and controlled most of the military and police, had stepped up confrontation with the winner of the last election, the royalist's FUNCINPEC. This ultimately led to a bloody coup d'etat on July 5, 1997 in which head of the FUNCINPEC

and First Prime Minister of the coalition government, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, was ousted by his CPP coalition partner, Second Prime Minister Hun Sen.<sup>2</sup> Another killing field occurred when more than forty FUNCINPEC followers, including senior military and political officials, were cruelly executed by the CPP's military and police forces. Another episode of civil war flared up in the countryside, giving the weak, nearly-defunct Khmer Rouge hardcores an opportunity to accelerate their struggle.<sup>3</sup>

One could say that these consequences seem to be a legacy left behind by the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) and the Supreme National Council (SNC). Now, let's try to explore the significance of the UNTAC, a complex, multi-dimensional peace keeping operation, which has achieved both success and failure.

### **THE CONFLICT**

The invasion of Vietnamese troops and the installation of a Cambodian puppet regime (the State of Cambodia -- SOC) in 1979 gave rise to a guerrilla movement of three major resistance groups: the Royalist's National Union Front for Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC), the Liberalist's Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) and the Khmer Rouge's Government of Democratic Kampuchea (GDK). To become a legitimate body and gain support from international and

regional communities, the two non-communist resistance groups in mid-1982 formed with the Khmer Rouge a Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) headed by Prince (now King) Sihanouk-- the Khmer Rouge had occupied the Cambodian seat in the UN since it took power in the country in 1975.

**Table 1**

**The four Cambodian factions and their military forces**

---

1. People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (State of Cambodia --SOC)
  - Electoral name: Cambodian People's Party
  - Leader: Hun Sen, Prime Minister
  - Armed Force: Cambodian People's Armed Forces (CPAF)
2. Front Uni Nationale Pour Une Cambodge Independent, Neutre, Pacifique et Cooperatif (National Union Front for Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia -- FUNCINPEC)
  - Electoral name: FUNCINPEC
  - Leader: Prince Ranariddh (replaced his father Prince Sihanouk in 1991)
  - Armed Force: Arme Nationale pour Kampuchea Independent (National Army of Independent Kampuchea -- ANKI)
3. Khmer People's national Liberation Front (KPNLF)
  - Electoral name: Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP)
  - Leader: Son San
  - Armed Force: Khmer People's National Armed Forces (KPNLAF)
4. Government of Democratic Kampuchea (GDK- Khmer Rouge or DK)
  - Electoral name: National Unity Party of Cambodia -- NUPC
  - Leader: Khieu Samphan (nominal); Pol Pot (actual)
  - Armed Force: National Army of Democratic Kampuchea -- NADK

---

The conflict was shaped by the collapse of legitimacy of the Cambodian state following the "auto-genocide" inflicted by the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979 and the ensuing installation of

a "puppet" Heng Samrin-Hun Sen regime by the Vietnamese.<sup>4</sup> The objectives of the CGDK, with the support of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN), the UN and the US, were to liberate Cambodia from the Vietnamese aggressors, restore the independence and sovereignty of Cambodia and set up a western-style democratic government. The SOC and its Vietnamese and Soviet Union supporters insisted on preserving the Soviet-style communist governments in Indochina and preventing the Khmer Rouge from returning to power.

### **PEACE AGREEMENTS**

It took almost ten years to develop the Cambodian Peace Settlement that was initiated by UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar. He instructed his Representative for Southeast Asia, Raffeeudin Ahmed, to make contact with all Cambodian parties and other regional states to provide avenues for negotiation. Between 1982 and 1985, in consultation with those parties and states, Ahmed proceeded to develop the outlines of a comprehensive solution that engaged all four Cambodian factions, established a cease-fire, supervised the withdrawal of all foreign forces, guaranteed Cambodia's independence and neutrality, repatriated refugees, demobilized military forces, provided for genuine national self determination through free and fair elections, and instituted a human rights education program

to help insure a non-return of the policies and practices of the recent past.<sup>5</sup>

A meeting for the first time between the two front leaders, Sihanouk and Hun Sen, was brokered by India and Indonesia in late 1987, to discuss the possibility of peace. Apart from the national level of negotiations, peace proposals had alternatively been engaged in by regional nations and international actors, particularly the five permanent members of the Security Council (Perm Five or P5).

#### **Regional Peace Arrangements**

With encouragement of the Secretary-General and the Indonesian foreign minister, Ali Alatas, the two Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIM I and II) were organized in July 1988 and February 1989. These were attended by all four Cambodian factions meeting together for the first time and by Laos, Vietnam and ASEAN member states.<sup>6</sup> JIM I and II succeeded in identifying the need for an international mechanism to supervise the transition to peace, but the participants could not reach an agreement on how it would operate.<sup>7</sup>

France and Indonesia<sup>8</sup> jointly convened the one month-long Paris Conference on Cambodia, from July 30 to August 30, 1989. The conference became deadlocked over demands by the CGDK factions for a quadripartite power-sharing arrangement with Hun Sen's Government. Hun Sen rejected any genuine power-sharing arrangement with the Khmer Rouge.

Subsequently, There was a key conceptual breakthrough which was an idea originally proposed by US Congressman Stephen Solarz to the Australian foreign minister, Gareth Evans. The proposal envisaged that, instead of a quadripartite power-sharing arrangement, the UN itself would temporarily take over the administration of Cambodia, canton and demobilize the armed forces of the various parties, and conduct the election, after which it would transfer power to a new Cambodian government. The Australians fashioned this idea into the "red book," a detailed array of options for a UN transitional role in Cambodia, complete with cost and personnel estimates and a proposed electoral system. This document was tabled as a negotiating "resource" at a February 1990 meeting in Jakarta which became known, confusingly, as the Informal Meeting on Cambodia (IMC). Japan, meanwhile, convened the Tokyo Conference on Cambodia on 4-5 June 1990, its first major effort to become involved in the Cambodia peace process. Tokyo's initiative unfortunately backfired when the Khmer Rouge failed to attend.<sup>9</sup>

#### **Global Peace Negotiations**

With the failure of the peace process and the withdrawal of the Vietnamese troops in late 1989, war resumed in Cambodia. Now the Perm Five took the initiative, beginning with a P5 meeting in Paris in January 1990 with subsequent meetings alternating monthly between Paris and New York.<sup>10</sup> The end of the Cold War and the pressures from the Perm Five, coupled with the Gareth

Evans draft and papers of UN secretariat, led to the agreement by all Cambodian parties to the formation of two Institutions. The first, the Supreme National Council (SNC), represented by all Cambodian factions (six from SOC and six from CGDK) under the chairmanship of King Sihanouk, was a unique legitimate body representing Cambodian sovereignty during the transitional period. The other organization was UNTAC, a functional mechanism implementing the Paris Peace Accords. Meanwhile the Security Council amended the Framework document to provide for only seventy per cent demobilization of the forces of each party, rather than complete disarmament. This was intended to ease the SOC's fears of a Khmer Rouge take-over after SOC forces had been disarmed and demobilized, and was agreed to by the factions at a further SNC meeting in Pattaya, Thailand, in late August.<sup>11</sup>

#### **The Paris Peace Accords**

The Agreements on comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict were finally signed in Paris on 23 October 1991 by all the four Cambodian factions, the Perm Five, and the twelve states involved in the Paris Conference.<sup>12</sup> This launched the UN into a complex multidimensional role. UNTAC was required by the Agreements to:

- Monitor the cease-fire and the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces, and to supervise the cantonment, disarmament and demobilization of Cambodian military forces;

- Control five crucial aspects of civil administration of the Cambodian factions -- Defense, Interior, Information, Finance and Foreign Affairs;
- Organize and Monitor the election, as a first step to a "system of liberal democracy, on the basis of pluralism";
- Foster an environment in which respect for human rights and fundamental freedom is insured;
- Coordinate with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) the repatriation of more than 365,000 refugees; and
- Help plan to raise funds for the social and economic rehabilitation of Cambodia.<sup>13</sup>

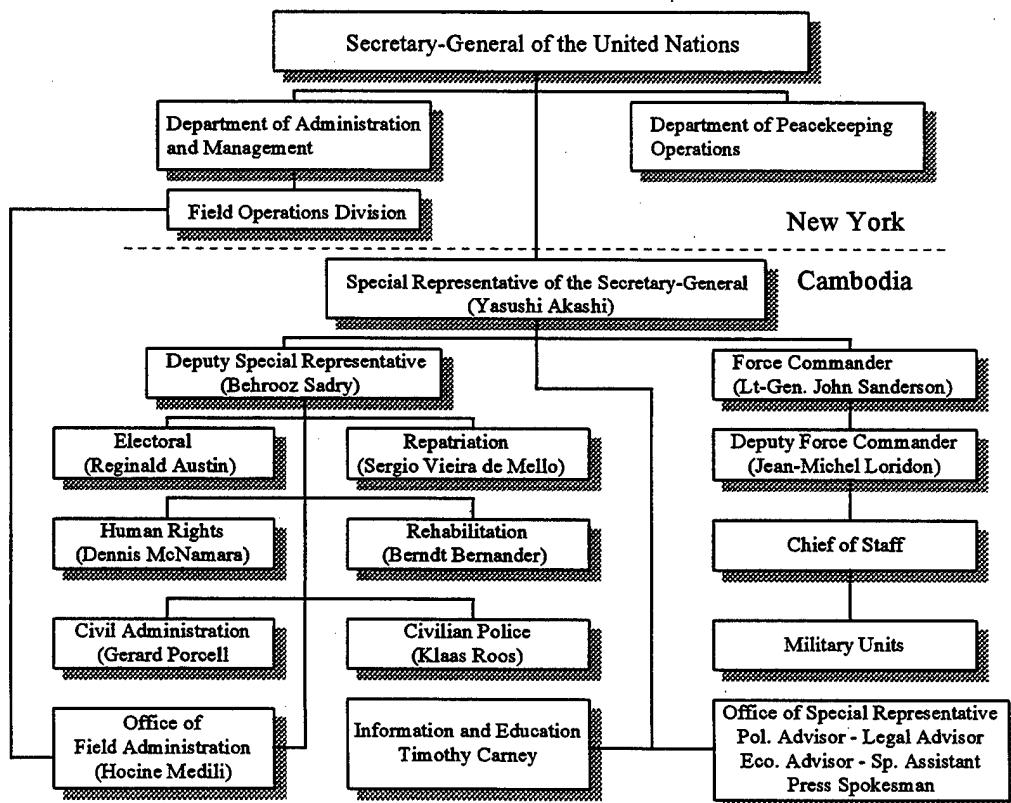
### **UNTAC EMPLOYMENT**

Upon assuming the office of UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros Gahli appointed Yasushi Akashi from Japan as his Special Representative heading the UNTAC delegation.<sup>14</sup> Between June and October 1992, UN personnel were deployed throughout Cambodia marking the beginning of the UNTAC mission. UNTAC had two Divisions -- Civilian and Military Operations. On the civilian side, Deputy Special Representative, Behrooz Sadry, an Iranian, supervised six Components: an Electoral Component supervised by Zimbabwean law professor Reginald Austin; a Repatriation Component, led by a Brazilian senior UNHCR official Vieira de

Mello; a Rehabilitation Component, headed by a Swedish senior UN Development Program official Berndt Bernander; a Human Rights Component, overseen by Dennis McNamara from New Zealand; a Civil Police Component, led by a Dutch police chief named Klaas Roos; and Civil Administration Component, headed by a French judge named Gerard Porcell. Another division, the Information and Education Division, was not originally defined as a separate component; it functioned as a unit within the Office of the Special Representative and was headed by an American, Timothy Carney (figure 1).<sup>15</sup>

**Figure 1**

**UNTAC Organizational Chart**



In addition, Karim became political advisor; Vishakan Krishnadasan, a Sri Lankan lawyer, the legal advisor; and Roger Lawrence, an American, the economic advisor. Eric Falt, of France's mission in New York, was tapped as the press spokesman. UNTAC was seen to have employed approximately 22,874 military, police and civilian personnel drawn from over 100 countries -- the troops and police being provided by 46 countries (see table). A total of 3,600 civil police (CivPols), 2,000 civilian personnel and 450 low-paid UN volunteers (UNVs) were worked for the civilian division.<sup>16</sup> About 62,000 Cambodians were recruited to help with the election.

The Military Component was placed under the command of an Australian Lieutenant-General, John Sanderson, with Brigadier-General Loridon as deputy force commander. To implement the military aspects of the mission and act as a first level of response to suspected infractions, the Paris Accords established a Mixed Military Working Group (MMWG) composed of senior military representatives of each faction, chaired by the UN chief of Military Component and supported by a secretariat. It was the only quadripartite body established by the Accords apart from the SNC and its secretariat.

The deployment of 16,129 military personnel from 34 different countries began in June 1992 and was not completed until October, three months late according to the plan. The employment of forces included twelve enlarged infantry battalions

from eleven countries, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia (two), Malaysia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Tunisia and Uruguay; three engineer units from Thailand, China and Japan; and a communications battalion from Australia; as well as a Logistic unit, Medical units, air support units, Military Police, Military Observers and other smaller elements (table 2).

**Table 2**

**Countries providing military Personnel and civil police to UNAMIC/UNTAC**

	Military	CivPols		Military	CivPols
Algeria	x	x	Japan	x Eng.	x
Argentina	x		Jordan		x
Australia	x Com.	x	Kenya		x
Austria	x	x	Malaysia	x Inf.	x
Bangladesh	x Inf.	x	Morocco		x
Belgium	x		Namibia	x	
Brunei	x	x	Nepal		x
Bulgaria	x Inf.	x	Netherlands	x Inf.	x
Cameroon	x	x	New Zealand	x	
Canada	x Tran.		Nigeria		x
Chile	x		Norway		x
China	x Eng.		Pakistan	x Inf.	x
Colombia		x	Philippines	x	x
Egypt		x	Poland	x	
Fiji		x	Russia	x Air	
France	x Inf.	x	Senegal	x	
Germany	x Med.	x	Singapore	x	x
Ghana	x Inf.	x	Sweden		x
Hungary		x	Thailand	x Eng.	
India	x Inf.	x	Tunisia	x Inf.	x
Indonesia	x Inf. (2)	x	UK	x	
Ireland	x	x	Uruguay	x Inf.	
Italy		x	USA	x	

UNTAC was authorized to use approximately \$1.72 billion during both UNAMIC and UNTAC mandates and the time was twenty five months, November 1991 till December 1993.

## **CHALLENGES DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION**

### **UNTAC's Success**

UNTAC has enjoyed some major successes from this complex operation. First, the arrival of UNTAC restored the sovereignty of Cambodia and the Cambodians enjoyed true independence. Secondly, the election set for May 23, 1993 was ultimately organized under the supervision of UNTAC and the majority of the Cambodian people came to vote. And thirdly, 365,000 refugees were successfully repatriated from the camps in Thailand.

However there were many important tasks that UNTAC was unable to accomplish, and those would bring consequences for Cambodia that still affect the country. UNTAC's failure to implement the peace process properly has caused continued political instability which has resulted from the inability to achieve free and fair elections, the survival of internal insurgency because of the Khmer Rouge, and the collapse of the effort of national reconciliation following the establishment of a new legitimate government.

### **UNAMIC, the "interim period" and Phase I "cease-fire"**

After signing the Peace Accords, the UN Secretary-General recognized that the UN would be unable to mobilize itself rapidly enough to deploy UNTAC immediately.<sup>17</sup> By his recommendation, the Security Council authorized the establishment of a UN Advanced Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) which was apparently intended to represent the "good offices" of the Secretary-General and to work primarily with the factional military leaders to maintain the cease-fire until the arrival of UNTAC. Headed by the Bangladeshi diplomat, Ataul Karim, and the French Military component commander, Brigadier-General Jean-Michel Loridon, UNAMIC arrived on November 9, 1991 with an international staff of 268. UNAMIC eventually set up monitoring points and liaison teams in the country, particularly at the factions' Headquarters.

In Phase One, which began with the signing of the Peace Agreement, a complete cease-fire should have been in place and when that process was satisfied, the Force Commander would declare the entry of Phase Two: the cantonment, disarmament and seventy per cent demobilization of the factions' military forces.

The delay in deployment of the UN delegation created a great opportunity for UNTAC's failure and allowed the situation to change. Akashi was not appointed until March 1992, five months after the Peace Accords, which affected the immediate planning for the prompt deployment of UN personnel and postponed the procurement and recruitment of subordinate officials. The

selection of Mr. Akashi, however, was made as a special favor for King Sihanouk, who made known his preference for Akashi as head of UNTAC. In choosing Akashi, the international community hoped to increase Japan's involvement in the peacekeeping.

Due to the delay, the Cambodian factions appeared to lose confidence in UNTAC and lost their commitment to the peace implementation. The Khmer Rouge and SOC kept gaining territory, which led to the deterioration of peace and increased the cease-fire violations. The UNAMIC did nothing to curb frequent violations of the cease-fire, including large operations launched by both Khmer Rouge and SOC in early 1992.

Instability in Phnom Penh was heightened by the political free-for-all which developed after the Hun Sen government announced in November that Cambodia would become a multi-party state. Corrupt officials seized the opportunity to sell state assets for personal gain, while ordinary Cambodians began voicing their dissatisfaction with official malpractice and corruption. In mid December 1991 anti-corruption riots against the government resulted in bloodshed.<sup>18</sup> Another political turmoil in Phnom Penh also had a negative impact on the peace process: Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan was attacked by a SOC-inspired group, fled the city, and never returned.

Up to mid-1992, only two of UNTAC's 12 battalions, those from Indonesia and Malaysia, were fully deployed and both were faced with problems of self-sufficiency due to the lack of

logistical support that arrived even later. Of the twenty four checkpoints planned to monitor withdrawal of foreign forces and verify that new military equipment and supplies were not entering the country, only three, on the border with Vietnam, had been established by the end of April 1992.<sup>19</sup>

By May 1992, most of the civil administrative components were only beginning to be established and had insufficient staff. The Civilian Police personnel were not fully fielded until October 1992. It was really too late for UNTAC to be able to control the five administrative ministries of the factions.

The safe repatriation of Cambodian refugees was the most successful operation. The process began in March 1992 and within a year all 365,000 refugees were completely repatriated. A major problem encountered by the UNHCR in resettling repatriated refugees was the lack of sufficient mine-free arable land where the returned refugees were choosing to settle. Many returned to a countryside in which forces in conflict still held the ground and into the area where many minefields remained largely unmarked.

#### **Phase II: Cantonment, Disarmament and Demobilization**

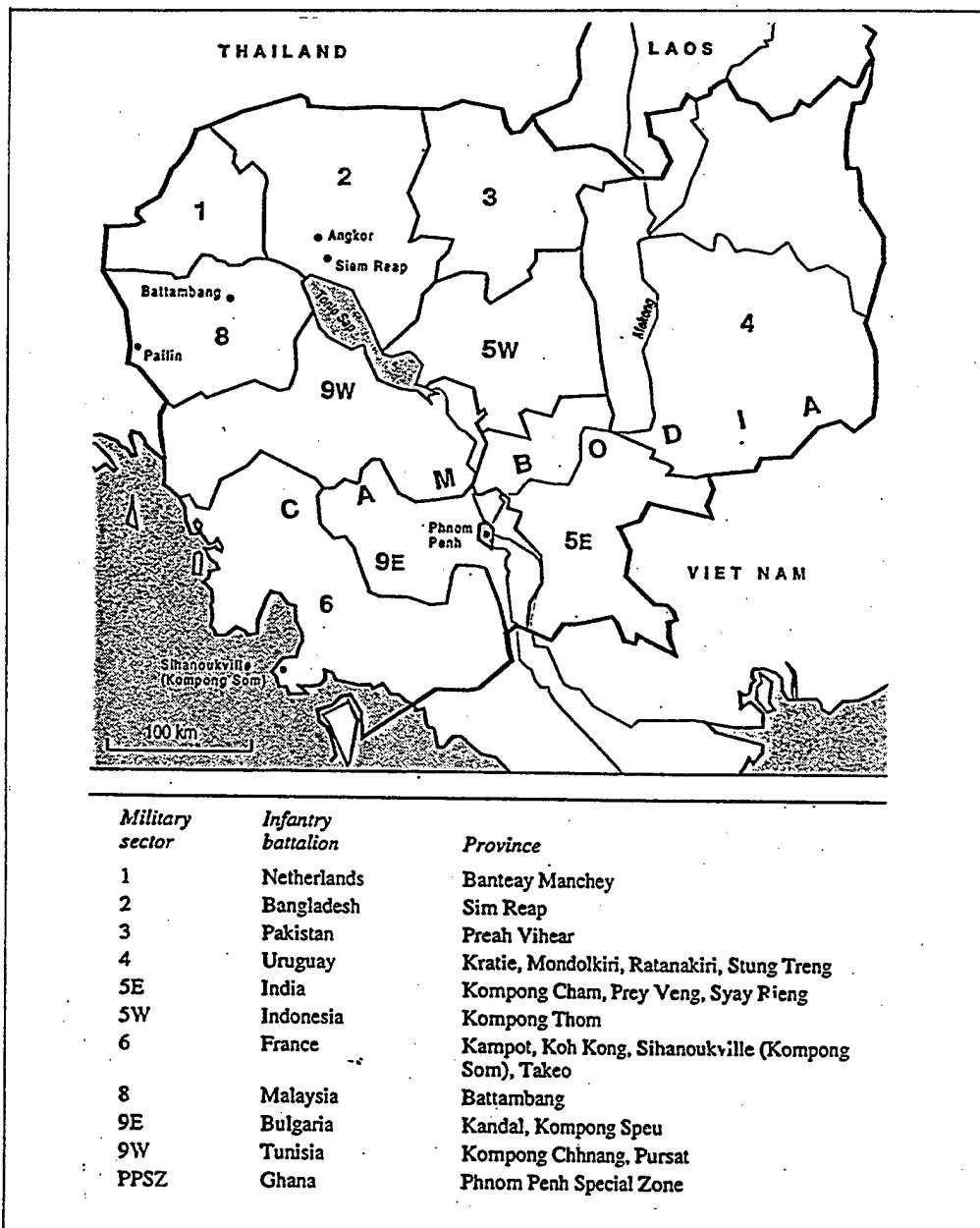
While Phase One of the peace plan had been difficult enough, real trouble began when UNTAC attempted to move into Phase Two, which was officially declared to start on 13 June 1992. Although the other three factions agreed to temporarily comply with the agreement, with 55,000 troops eventually appearing at the

cantonment sites, the Khmer Rouge refused to join Phase Two and to allow UNTAC's access into their controlled zones. The guerrillas claimed that the Paris Accords were not being implemented properly because, they claimed, Vietnamese troops remained in Cambodia and the SOC had not surrendered power to the SNC.<sup>20</sup>

Increased cease-fire violations flared up everywhere, including a large-scale operation from the SOC. UNTAC did not react significantly to stop these violations but increased its efforts to apply economic sanctions against the Khmer Rouge. It did not achieve the desired effect. The repeated request for Bangkok to close the border was not complied with because the Thai military had such a large financial stake in cross-border trade, as did those protected Thai companies involved in logging, gem mining and drug-running. Instead of bringing the Khmer Rouge in line with the Accords it caused them to totally boycott the peace process. The failure of the Civil Administration Components to control five SOC ministries caused UNTAC to be accused of taking sides. In this respect, it lost "impartiality," leading to the strong condemnation by the Khmer Rouge of its being "the Vietnamese puppet".

In July 1992 General Loridon, deputy force commander, was relieved of his position after advocating the use of force against the Khmer Rouge. Loridon was quoted as suggesting that he would accept the deaths of up to 200 soldiers including his

Figure 2:  
Deployment of UNTAC's Infantry Battalions, late 1992



own, to end the KR threat once and for all, but failed to get his superiors to agree with this statement. Akashi said that he was startled by the General's remarks, since a military plan that

cost 200 lives would be "a failure, a bankruptcy, of a peacekeeping operation."<sup>21</sup> The Chief of Civil Administration also resigned because he saw no hope for the success of his mission.

Phase Two collapsed and UN personnel became targets of Khmer Rouge attacks in which 84 UN personnel were reported to have been killed and 58 others seriously injured. The Khmer Rouge threat was expansively used as a pretext for other factions' political maneuvers. Cantoned troops and weapons were released and returned to other factions for self-defense.

### **The Election**

With the failure of the cantonment and disarmament phase of the peace plan and the burgeoning threat to the neutral political environment which UNTAC was supposed to have established, the UN Security Council now had to decide whether or not to proceed with the election in May 1993. The alternatives were to proceed, to postpone it until the Khmer Rouge's cooperation was secured, or to cancel it and effectively scuttle the Paris Accords.

The UN peace plan was not designed to heal all of Cambodia's wounds and completely repair the damage of more than fifteen years of civil war. As Akashi said in August 1992, "we are not here to solve all the problems of Cambodia."<sup>22</sup> It meant that the UN peace plan was designed to jump-start the process, not carry it through to completion. The UNTAC was plagued by the lack of commitment from its leaders. Akashi noted in an interview in

July 1992, "the goal is to ensure a *neutral political environment* for the election -- nothing more and nothing less."<sup>23</sup> In contrast, when the disarmament and cantonment of the factions' forces failed to take place, UNTAC's guaranty of a neutral political environment collapsed and Akashi turned his priority towards the election-driven policy in his approach to his entire mandate. Shortly after the end of UNTAC, Akashi, while speaking at Johns Hopkins University stated that the priority he accorded *to carry out the election successfully was apparent.*<sup>24</sup>

Abandonment of Cambodia was seen by Secretary-General Boutros Ghali as unacceptable and on 13 October 1992 the UN Security Council unanimously voted to proceed with the election.<sup>25</sup> Far from returning to the peace process, the Khmer Rouge began to massacre Vietnamese villages and businesses. They also stepped up the attacks, abductions and murders of UN peace-keepers and others.

Meanwhile the SOC began harassing opposition political parties, especially the Royalist's FUNCINPEC, intimidating voters, bombing electoral offices and even murdering candidates and party officials. Most threatening to the free and fair election process was the UNTAC's failure to assert adequate control over the SOC security forces and police, whose capabilities could have reached numerous levels of intimidation. Clandestine groups called "Reaction Forces" were tasked with the overt disruption of legitimate political activity through verbal

and physical attacks on opposition party members and offices and by preventing opposition figures from canvassing freely. Another group, A-92, was tasked with infiltrating opposition parties to create internal dissension and disruption. According to UNTAC's estimate, there were 200 deaths, 338 injured, and 144 abductions as a result of pre-election violence.<sup>26</sup>

UNTAC was hampered not only by the lack of a functioning judiciary system but was relying on the court under SOC control. When UNTAC finally drafted appropriate laws and set up an Office of Special Prosecutor, it was "too little too late." None of the human rights violators were ever brought to trial or removed from office. However, polling took place during the period of 23-28 May 1993, when 89.5% of 4.6 million registered voters came to cast their vote.

**Table 3**  
**The May 1993 election results**

Party	Number of Seats	Percentage
FUNCINPEC	58	45.47
Cambodia People's Party (CPP)	51	38.23
Buddhist Liberal democratic Party (BLDP)	10	3.81
Molinaka Party	1	1.37
Other Parties	-	11.12

#### **Post-election uncertainty**

The failure to ensure a neutral political environment had already caused the election to be unfair. It was an atmosphere

of fear and death and most of the people in the countryside were either fearful that their vote could be known by the SOC's security forces or unclear how to check the list of the desired party. The election results suffered from serious political intimidation and harassment and UNTAC's inability to ensure confidence in a secret vote.

The royalist non-communist party FUNCINPEC narrowly won the election, but the SOC and its party, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), strongly refused to transfer power. CPP alleged that the UN and foreign countries had engineered a conspiracy of massive electoral fraud which had deprived it of victory. There was also an attempt for territorial "secession" led by top CPP leaders and the hint of a military coup.

Lobbied by King Sihanouk and Akashi, FUNCINPEC's head, Prince Ranariddh, accepted a compromise: the formation of a rushed provisional government and then a shaky coalition government with two prime ministers. As mentioned earlier, the July 5, 1997 coup was a major setback to building democracy in Cambodia. The country seemed to go back to the time before the election in which terror, killings, intimidation and economic failure were prominent.

Throughout their confrontations, both parties have been struggling to absorb into their military strengths the Khmer Rouge soldiers, whose support to any party could increase political power. The effects have been devastating. Not only

were hundreds of people killed and injured and some infrastructures destroyed, Cambodia's seat in the UN was also left vacant and a large amount of international aid has been frozen. Economic growth has dramatically dropped from 6.5 per cent to about 2 per cent. Fierce fighting has spread across the countryside, causing the flow of thousands of refugees to Thailand again. The continuing war led to the laying of even more mines in a countryside already suffering from the effects of twenty years of uncontrolled mining and the worst level of military and civilian mine casualties in the world.<sup>27</sup>

#### **OTHER ISSUES**

There were many other shortcomings that should be taken into account:

##### **Cooperation**

Regrettably, there was very little cooperation among UNTAC's components. From the beginning, each component conducted survey missions separately and operated independently. Both military and civilian components reported to Akashi directly, but there was initially no joint military-civilian staff to help coordinate their activities. Also, many of the civilian staff were extremely concerned for their personal safety while conducting operations in the countryside.

### **Uniformity of the Peacekeepers**

The quality of UNTAC troops was not uniform, some were inadequately trained and some contingents did not arrive with a sixty day self-sufficiency package as well as required basic equipment. Four of five companies of an 830-person military logistics battalion arrived in July 1992, after all the twelve infantry battalions had been deployed, and it was small (less than half of the size of what would normally support a force of UNTAC's size).<sup>28</sup> Large numbers of UN police were selected from security guards, paramilitary, military police, and anti-terrorist units. These personnel lacked community policing experience, many could not speak English or French, and many could not drive motor vehicles, causing many injuries and fatalities.

### **Rules of Engagement**

UNTAC did have standing rules of engagement that emphasized the peacekeeping nature of the operation. However, each national contingent differed in its interpretation of the following language from standing operating procedures: "The use of force is authorized either in self-defense or in resisting attempts by forceful means to prevent UNTAC from accomplishing its mission."<sup>29</sup> When the situation on the ground changed, the adopted rules of engagement were not clearly understood by all military contingents; some reacted by using minimal force for

self-defense, which was effective against a Khmer Rouge attack, while the others just laid down their arms and became captives.

#### **Disciplines and Cultural Sensitivity**

The lack of cultural sensitivity and discipline were also serious factors that damaged the credibility of the peace-keepers and reduced the locals' respect. UN soldiers and police have been involved in weapons smuggling, sexual harassment, non performance of duties, and causing numerous Cambodian fatalities from recklessly driven UN vehicles. The breakdown of the cantonment process clearly left UN peacekeepers with little to do and it was common to see a number of white UN vehicles parked outside Phnom Penh bars and brothels. The cases of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection, which was practically unknown in Cambodia prior to the UN's arrival, continued to increase.<sup>30</sup> Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General Mr. Akashi failed to pacify widespread concern, especially among female members of UNTAC, when he responded by saying that "18-year old hot-blooded soldiers enduring the rigors of Cambodia had the right to enjoy themselves, to drink a few beers and chase beautiful young beings of the opposite sex."<sup>31</sup>

The Bulgarian Battalion caused the greatest number of unpleasant incidents. According to the lurid press report,<sup>32</sup> thirty per cent of the Bulgarian Battalion were former prisoners; a dozen of them threatened to kill General Sanderson unless he increased their pay; and on departure from Cambodia some of these

troops attempted to smuggle exotic animals and weapons and harassed flight attendants on the aircraft leased by the UN to take them back to Bulgaria. Other recorded incidents included murder and threatening to kill Cambodian people. Between July and November 1992, eighty one UN personnel were reprimanded for disciplinary reasons and fifty six were Bulgarians. General Sanderson emphasized, however, that a UN Force Commander has no legal authority over the national contingents under his command and must rely on the contributing countries themselves to respond rapidly to poor behavior on the part of their troops.<sup>33</sup>

#### **Morale**

Morale was adversely affected by disparities in pay and conditions between the military and the civilian components and among national contingents within the military component. Some troops were paid less than they had expected before they left home. The Russian pilots refused to fly their aircraft because they were not paid at all for several months. The Bulgarian conscripts were not paid at all, while the Australians received generous pay and allowances.<sup>34</sup> There was also criticism of special privileges accorded the Japanese military personnel because their living arrangements were more luxurious. The Japanese engineer battalion was sent to one of the safest areas in Cambodia, far from the Khmer Rouge camps.

### **Commitment**

Lack of firm commitment was also another factor. Some countries stated that they would withdraw their personnel in case of being seriously attacked. They chose to get away from risk rather than maintain the success of their mission. There was confusion after the death of a Japanese police officer, causing more than 20 Japanese police officers to flee to Phnom Penh never returning to their stations, citing illness. Four left the country entirely. Faced with danger, nearly a third of the Japanese civilian police deserted their posts.

Another factor was the lack of understanding at UN headquarters in New York. According to General Sanderson, the problem was largely due to the lack of staff in New York who could properly forward information. Perhaps more critically, there is still no one there who can brief the Missions of the contributing countries and the Security Council on the essence of changes in the operational setting and plans.

### **Conclusion**

UNTAC was authorized by the Security Council under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. There are traditional "peacekeeping" operations, in which neutral UN personnel separate parties that have agreed to stop fighting. By contrast, missions authorized under Chapter VII permit the use of force to accomplish their goals and are generally regarded as "peace enforcement" missions.

That UNTAC ultimately stayed within the parameters of a Chapter VI mission and did not "creep" into Chapter VII enforcement actions was due largely to the insistence of General Sanderson and Mr. Akashi not to resort to force to disarm the factions.

UNTAC was "diplomatically aggressive, military passive". Akashi sought at every opportunity to negotiate a solution to UNTAC's impasse with the Khmer Rouge. Sanderson believed that the UN was better suited for peacekeeping missions and that peace enforcement should be left to the major powers. UNTAC would have required a mandate to engage in peace enforcement. It would also have required a totally different command structure.<sup>35</sup>

The mission was troubled from the outset by the non-compliance of the Khmer Rouge and the Hun Sen government, which threatened to unravel the Paris Peace Accords altogether. Clearly, the commitment to the peace process sacrificed by the local parties is extremely significant. The failure to comply with the peace Accords by the Cambodian factions has greatly contributed to the collapse of the whole process. While this was obviously not the fault of UNTAC, the way the authority handled these threats, unanticipated in the Paris Accords, was a key determinant of the outcome of the Cambodia operation.<sup>36</sup>

We should also remember that the consent of the parties that agreed to sign the papers did not mean that real peace would come to Cambodia immediately. Some of these people signed due to pressure from their "patrons," or they agreed to something

because they believed that it was in their best interests at that time and that they could get more from it than they would lose.

The tremendous efforts and sacrifices made by all participants in the Cambodian operation are undeniable. We Cambodians, have the utmost respect and pay profound gratitude to those who volunteered to sacrifice their mental and physical well-being for the sake of peace and freedom of a nation. However, we should benefit by the lessons learned from this experience and be better prepared for future missions.

5,233 words.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> FUNCINPEC won the election, but the CPP refused to concede defeat and accept the election result and transfer power. Lobbied by King Sihanouk and Head of UNTAC, Mr. Akashi, both parties reached a compromise to form a coalition government with two Prime Ministers. They have equal power.

<sup>2</sup> The Prince was accused by his Second Prime Minister Hun Sen of conspiring with the Khmer Rouge and illegal weapons smuggling

<sup>3</sup> Large number of Khmer Rouge broke away from their hardlined Pol Pot and joined the government leaving small KR group in Northern border with Thailand. There was an assassination of Khmer Rouge Commander-in-Chief Son Sen shortly after the breakaway. Both parties have also been straggling to bring the breakaway Khmer Rouge for their own political support in which the FUNCINPEC seemed to have gained much more popularity

<sup>4</sup> Michael W. Doyle, UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia : UNTAC's Civil Mandate, International Peace Academy Occasional Paper Services (Boulder. 10: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 18

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 21

<sup>6</sup> Trevor Findley, Cambodia: The Legacy and Lessons of UNTAC, SIPRI Research Report No. 9 (London: Oxford University Press, 1995), 4

<sup>7</sup> Doyle, UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia, 22

<sup>8</sup> French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas

<sup>9</sup> Findley, Cambodia, 6

<sup>10</sup> Doyle, UNTAC's Civil Mandate, 23

<sup>11</sup> Findley, Cambodia, 10

<sup>12</sup> Australia, Brunei, Canada, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam and Yugoslavia

<sup>13</sup> Doyle, UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia, 27

<sup>14</sup> It was the changeover of the UN Secretary-General. Rafeeuddin who had the greatest familiarity with the actors of the peace process since 1981 was not chosen in the practical phases

<sup>15</sup> Janet E. Heininger, Peacekeeping in Transition -- The United Nations in Cambodia, (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1994), 41

<sup>16</sup> Findley, Cambodia, 27

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 22

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 34

<sup>20</sup> Steven R. Ratner, The New UN Peacekeeping: building peace in lands of conflict after the Cold War, (New York: St. Martin's Press 1995), 169

<sup>21</sup> Findley, Cambodia, 38

<sup>22</sup> Heininger, Peacekeeping in Transition, 38

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Findley, Cambodia, 39

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 81

<sup>27</sup> Michael W. Doyle, Peacebuilding in Cambodia, (International Peace Academy, 1996)

<sup>28</sup> Heininger, Peacekeeping in Transition, 69

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 75

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 129

<sup>31</sup> Findley, Cambodia, 140

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 139

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 140

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 141

<sup>35</sup> Heininger, Peacekeeping in Transition, 66-67

<sup>36</sup> Findley, Cambodia, 155

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## Chronology

Date	Major Events
November 1953	Cambodia wins limited independence from France
July 1954	Independence confirmed by Geneva Conference on Indochina
18 March 1970	Prince Sihanouk disposed by Lon Nol, Siri Mata, Cheng Heng
23 March 1970	Prince Sihanouk announces the formation of the National United
Front of Kampuchea, including Khmer Rouge, to oppose Lon Nol regime	
30 April 1970	US and South Vietnam troops invade Cambodia, attacking communist bases
9 October 1970	Khmer Republic is declared, supported by the US
27 January 1973	Paris Agreement to end war in Vietnam call on all parties to end military activities in Cambodia
17 April 1975	Khmer Rouge come to power and orders evacuation of Phnom Penh and other cities
9 September 1975	Sihanouk becomes head of state of Democratic Kampuchea
4 April 1976	Prince Sihanouk resigns as head of state and is put under house arrest
November 1978	Vietnam signs 25-year friendship treaty with USSR
25 December 1978	Vietnam invades Cambodia
1979 - 81	Democratic Kampuchea occupies a seat at UN
22 June 1982	Khmer Rouge, Son San and Prince Sihanouk form Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) which is seated in UN
7 May 1987	Sihanouk steps down for a year as president of UN-recognized CGDK in protest of Khmer Rouge attacks on his supporters
26 May 1988	Vietnam announces it will withdraw 50,000 troops from Cambodia by end of 1988
1 July 1988	Chinese foreign ministry proposes a four-point peace plan, offering to act as guarantor of a Cambodia settlement
25 July 1988	Warring factions meet in Bogor, Indonesia for four-day informal meeting; Premier Hun Sen of Vietnamese-backed Cambodia regime offers a peace plan
28 July 1988	Prince Sihanouk's representatives at Bogor talks introduce alternative peace plan, talks end without agreement on final communiqué
6 January 1989	Cambodian President Heng Samrin announces Vietnamese troops withdrawal by September 1989 if Cambodia peace settlement is reached by that time
21 March 1989	Talks are suspended
5 April 1989	Premier Hun Sen announces Vietnam will withdraw all 70,000 troops by 30 September
2 May 1989	Hun Sen and Prince Sihanouk begin two-day meeting in Jakarta

3 May 1989	In Jakarta, Sihanouk announces he is willing to return to Cambodia as head of state if Hun Sen agrees to a multiparty system and a coalition government
6 July 1989	US secretary of state James Baker announces US backing of the Hun Sen-Sihanouk negotiations, effectively shifting US position regarding Hun Sen's government as legitimate
30 July 1989	Cambodia peace conference begins in Paris with representatives of warring factions and 19 states attending
27 August 1989	Sihanouk resigns as head of guerrilla faction, but remains president of resistance coalition
30 August 1989	Paris peace talks end, failing to reach any agreement
21 September 1989	Vietnam begins final withdrawal of troops
24 November 1989	Australian foreign minister, Gareth Evans, proposes UN administration of Cambodia to ensure Vietnamese withdrawal and a cease-fire, and to organize election
14 December 1989	Hun Sen announces he will disband his government and allow UN supervision for the purpose of election and in return asks that Cambodia UN seat be vacated
15 January 1990	UN permanent members meet in Paris, agreeing to enhanced UN role to end conflict
24 January 1990	Sihanouk resign as head of Cambodian resistance coalition
27 February 1990	peace talks are held in Jakarta; Cambodia government refuses to disband or allow UN administration before election
12 March 1990	UN permanent members meet in Paris, agreeing that UN should be responsible for election and government of Cambodia through UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)
10 April 1990	Sihanouk proposes nine-point peace plan
26 May 1990	Four factions sign cease-fire to begin 4 June
4 June 1990	Tokyo peace talks end due to Khmer Rouge boycott
5 June 1990	Vietnamese-backed government and non-communist resistance sign cease-fire agreement to begin 31 July
August 1990	UN permanent members dilute original provision for UN administration in light of Phnom Penh government objections
27 August 1990	UN security council agree on comprehensive peace plan
27 August	Khmer Rouge accepts UN peace plan
31 August 1990	Phnom Penh government backs UN peace plans with reservations
10 September 1990	Meeting in Jakarta, all four factions endorse UN peace plan and agree to form Supreme National Council (SNC)
20 September 1990	Resolution 688 endorses framework set out at Paris conference for comprehensive political settlement of conflict
23 September 1990	Hun Sen accepts Sihanouk's power-sharing deal to establish SNC
24 November 1990	Meeting in Paris, UN security council agree to final draft of peace settlement

7 February 1991 Phnom Penh government postpone scheduled 1991 election in hope of encouraging peace negotiations

9 April 1991 US offers to lift trade embargo on Vietnam in exchange for Vietnamese cooperation with UN-sponsored peace plan for Cambodia

23 April 1991 Sihanouk's forces accepts temporary cease-fire

26 April 1991 Khmer Rouge accepts UN-backed cease-fire

2 June 1991 Hun Sen accepts Sihanouk as chairman of SNC

3 June 1991 Khmer Rouge objects Sihanouk as chairman of SNC

4 June 1991 Three-day peace talks collapse

7 June 1991 Sihanouk join SNC

23 June 1991 Factions agree to indefinite cease-fire beginning 24 June

16-17 July 1991 Peace talks begins in Beijing, Sihanouk is unanimously elected as president of SNC

29 August 1991 Five-day peace talks end with only post-war electoral system left to be decided

16 October 1991 Resolution 717 establishes a UN Advanced Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC) after signing agreements for political settlement

23 October 1991 Four factions and 18 nations sign the Paris Peace Agreements

9 November 1991 UNAMIC arrives in Cambodia

10 November 1991 Sihanouk returns to Cambodia after 13 years in exile

17 November 1991 Khmer Rouge delegates returns to Cambodia

17 December 1991 Bloody demonstration against government corruption in Phnom Penh

30 December 1991 Factions hold talks in Phnom Penh and request immediate deployment of UN peacekeeping troops

19-21 January 1992 Phnom Penh forces attack in Kampong Thom province

26 February 1992 Khmer Rouge shoots UN helicopter, wounding an Australian lieutenant Colonel

15 March 1992 Yasushi Akashi, Special Representative of Secretary-General arrives in Phnom Penh

29 March 1992 Phnom Penh troops' offensive against Khmer Rouge in the north

30 March 1992 Repatriation of 365,000 Cambodia refugees begins

20 April 1992 Factions sign UN convention on human rights, in presence of visiting Boutros Ghali

May 1992 Deployment of some 450 UNV from 47 countries begins

10 June 1992 Khmer Rouge refuses to participate in demobilization process

13 June 1992 Phase II, cantonment, disarmament and demobilization, begins

22 June 1992 Tokyo donor meeting pledges US\$880 million for reconstruction of Cambodia

1 July 1992 UNTAC's civil administration component is deployed to provinces

2 July 1992 Khmer Rouge places conditions on its compliance with peace process at SNC

26 July 1992 At Manila meeting, EC, US, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Malaysia, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Brunei agree to back UN sanctions against Khmer Rouge

13 August 1992	SRSG signs electoral law
17 August 1992	Provisional registration of political parties begins
16 August	UNTAC releases demobilized SOC troops from cantonment sites for agriculture leave
7 September 1992	Khmer Rouge drops demand for UN verification of Vietnamese troops withdrawal
17 September 1992	Khmer Rouge ends three-month boycott of MMWG meeting
20 September 1992	Deployment of Japanese peacekeeping troops
5 October 1992	Voter registration begins in Phnom Penh. Throughout the provinces over the following three months, 4,764,430 voters are registered
13 October 1992	Resolution 783 maintains that the election should continue despite Khmer Rouge opposition
21 October 1992	Akashi announces temporary freeze of disarmament process due to Khmer Rouge threat
6-8 November 1992	Factions and ten states meet in Beijing to save peace plan but fail to reach agreement, Khmer Rouge continue to refuse to lay down their arms and to participate in the election
11 November 1992	Radio UNTAC broadcast for the first time using SOC transmitter
25 November 1992	Armed men fire at an electoral team in Siemreap, wounding a Fijian electoral member
30 November 1992	UN Resolution 972 confirms the election no later than May 1993
1 December 1992	KR detains 6 unarmed UNMOS and UNNOS 20 km west of Kampong Thom. They are freed on 4 December
8 December 1992	KR boycott SNC meeting
15 December 1992	KR detains 42 Indonesian soldiers in Kampong Thom, released on 18 December
18 December 1992	KR detains 8 Uruguayan soldiers in Kratie, released on 19 and 20 December
22 December 1992	President of security council condemns KR illegal detention in UNTAC personnel
27 December 1992	KR kills 13 Vietnamese
28 December 1992	KR refuses UN plan
31 December 1992	KR shells UN troops
4 January 1993	Sihanouk announces cessation of cooperation with UN peacekeepers
6 January 1993	Office of Special Prosecutor established
12 January 1993	Gunmen kill first 2 UNTAC's Cambodian workers in Siemreap
18 January 1993	KR detains 4 UNMOS in Kampong Thom
27 January 1993	Deadline for political parties registration, KR refuses to submit an application
29 January 1993	Phnom Penh launches offensive against KR
31 January 1993	6 FUNCINPECs arrested by SOC, they are disappeared
8-9 February 1993	5 Cambodia killed and 16 injured during the attack by armed group in Pursat
11 March 1993	KR kills 33 Vietnamese civilian near Siemreap

24 March 1993 8 Vietnamese kill in Boribo, Kampong Chhnang

29 March 1993 4 explosions at Vietnamese-run cafe in Phnom Penh, 2 dead and 27 wounded

3 April 1993 3 Bulgarian killed and 3 wounded by KR attack in Kampong Speu

7-8 April 1993 Visiting Boutros Ghali announces UN troops withdrawal on 22 August 1993

8 April 1993 Japanese UNV and his Cambodian interpreter are killed in Kampong Thom

13 April 1993 KR officials withdraw from Phnom Penh

19 April 1993 1 Bulgarian killed by KR attack in Kampong Speu

20 April 1993 UN removes UNMOs from Kampong Thom

3 May 1993 9 Cambodians killed in KR attack in Siemreap

4 May 1993 KR attacks Dutch convoy on Route 691, 5 Dutch soldiers injured, one Japanese CivPol killed and another Japanese CivPol wounded

7 May 1993 Another attack on Bulgarian HQ in Kampong Speu, One Bulgarian seriously wounded, a Filipino CivPol dies of a heart attack. A Colombian CivPol dies from wounds sustained during KR attack in Chamka Leu, Kampong Cham

8 May 1993 KR attacks Pakistani troops at Choam Khsan, Preah Vihear, 2 KR killed on spot

12 May 1993 UN reduces number of polling stations from 1,800 to 1,561

16 May 1993 KR shells UN troops at Siemreap airport

23-28 May 1993 Election held

24 May 1993 UN and Hun Sen discuss broken ballot box seals and other "irregularity" alleged by CPP

29 May 1993 FUNCINPEC and BLDP accept election result, but SOC reserves its final position

2 June 1993 Resolution 835 urges parties to accept election result

3 June 1993 Sihanouk proclaims himself president, prime minister and military commander of transitional government, Ranariddh and Hun Sen as vice prime ministers, but then withdraw the plan hours later

7 June 1993 Final vote count: FUNCINPEC 45.2%; CPP 38.6%; BLDP 3.7% and Moulinaka 1.3%

9 June 1993 UN declares election is fair

10 June 1993 SOC authorities organize demonstrations against UNTAC in Kampong Cham, Prey Veng and Svay Rieng as part of a "secession" movement

12 June 1993 Prince Chakrapong, CPP leader, declares the 3 provinces as autonomous zone to protest the election result. Ranariddh vows to take back

14 June 1993 Sihanouk is chosen head of state by new constituent assembly

15 June 1993 Resolution 840 certifies election result "free and fair", Chakrapong flees to Vietnam and the secession collapses

18 June 1993 FUNCINPEC, CPP and BLDP agree to form an interim government

21 June 1993 CPP accepts election result

24 June 1993 KR offers to act as advisors to interim government  
30 June 1993 First preliminary session of national assembly; Son San, president of BLDP is elected as chairman of constituent assembly  
1 July 1993 Constituent assembly approves Provisional National Government of Cambodia  
18 August 1993 Government launches attacks on KR  
21 September Constitution passed by constituent assembly  
24 September 1993 Sihanouk signs Constitution and becomes king  
26 September 1993 UN ends peacekeeping mission